I: Turnbull E-4. 8 (1951-1955) 1955 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

101 The term "Bambuti" was first applied by Schebesta (1933) to the Sua net hunters only, but after his second visit to the Ituri he widened his usage to include all the Ituri Pygmies (Schebesta, 1937). This is the sense in which it seems to be used by the Pygmies themselves and in which we use the term in this [197] study. The threefold linguistic subdivision of the Mbuti is the only attempt that has yet been made to divide the Mbuti into separate groups, but it is not yet certain how far this division has any anthropological validity. It is [619] impossible to speak of Mbuti tribes or sub-[614] tribes, and, although a number of clan names are known, no material available enables us to trace any semblance of a clan system. The only 621 certain units are the nuclear family and the 602 economic association of a number of such [594] families that form a hunting band. Schebesta (1948, 288 ff.) makes this point, using the terms *"Familie"* and *"Sippe."* He distinguishes *"Sippe"* from *"Grossfamilie,"* the former being primarily an economic association of incidentally related families and the second laying the emphasis on common descent. The coalescence [614] of several *"Grossfamilie"* into a clan is a concept of little significance to the Pygmy, and the clan, Schebesta writes, is in any case widely dispersed.

621 The size of these hunting bands varies,

162 [P.160-B]

[P.160-C]
among the archers from three to 37 huts,[1] but averages about six huts per hunting band (termed "*Lokalgruppe*" by Schebesta, 1948). The net-hunter bands are larger, averaging around 15 huts per hunting band. The particular Epulu band to be considered was an exceptionally large and fluid one, in itself varying from 10 to 30 huts. In practice it often became two hunting bands. Both Schebesta and Putnam agree that hunting bands do occasionally combine for some special hunting project, but that such alliances are temporary and rare. The Putnam material indicates that, even when such an association does take place, each band rigorously maintains its separate identity, building adjacent but separate camps.

Each single hunting band, among both archers and net hunters, has its own defined hunting area, but until more material is available it is impossible to learn in what other ways the forest is thought of as being divided.

1, [See footnote, bottom of p.160-D --Analyst]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Schebesta (1934) estimates the total population of the Ituri Mbuti to be more than 35,000, in an area of approximately 100,000 kilometers; Putnam's estimate was 40,000 within the same area. Lloyd (1899) gives the Pygmy population as fewer than 10,000, using information given to him by a Pygmy in the Central Ituri. According to this information the Pygmies inhabited the forest for a distance of seven days' march from east to west, and six days from north to south; and that there were 40 chiefs, each with from 40 to 200 followers, a few with as many as 500. There is no official count that can be drawn on, but Schebesta and Putnam both traveled extensively through the entire Ituri area, and the closeness of their estimates favors the acceptance of their figures as fair approximations. Lloyd's reference is interesting in that it gives some indication of what an individual Pygmy considers to be the extent of the Mbuti and their territory.

Reviewing his interpretation of demographic data collected on his first two visits to the Congo, as set out in "Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri," Schebesta (1952, 50–53) later says that among the Efe archers the average number of children born to each woman is three, of which two survive. He also finds that there is a

[1] Each hut represents a nuclear family—man, wife, and unmarried children.

[P.160-D]

[P. 161-A]
•162 slight excess of females in the composition of the population. He gives the following figures, evidently from a population of 411 adults.

	Children Per Cent	Adults Per Cent	Total Per Cent
Male	48.0	48.9	48.4
Female	52.0	51.1	51.6

[165] Infant mortality (32.7 per cent)
Average age 27–30
9 widowers among 201 men
9 widows among 210 women
14 polygamous families (3.1 per cent)

16 Demographic data for the Sua net hunters is
[114] not available. Putnam kept detailed medical records for all members of the band for a decade, but many of these have been lost in the course of shipment to the United States, and the few that are available do not provide a
[184] representative picture. From such data as are available, there does not seem, however, to be any significant difference between the two groups.

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

group. Fifty huts is the maximum given by Putnam, with 25 the average and between 20 and 40 the optimum. Each hut houses a man, his wife or wives, and a few children, so the total number of Pygmies to an average camp is

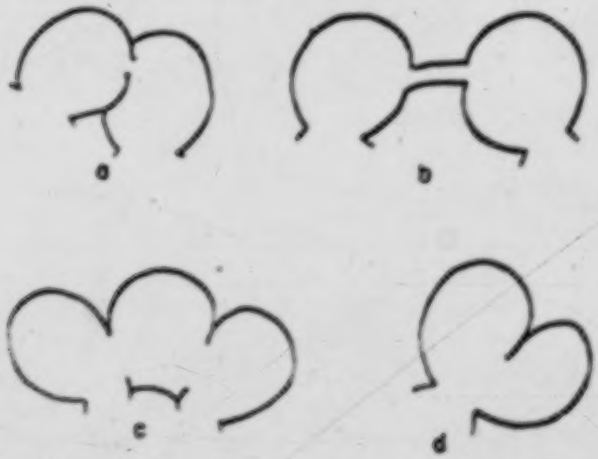

FIG. 17. Plan of net-hunters' polygynous or extended family dwellings (after Anne Putnam), Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[P. 194-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[p.194-C]

about 150, with from 20 to 40 active adult males.

Anne Putnam, whose experience was confined more to the net hunters of the Epulu region, mentions 17 huts as constituting a large camp (Fig. 16), some of the huts, however, possibly being in the form of double huts (Fig. 17). Huts are continually being enlarged or re-

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 195-A]

2: Turnbull E-S (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 dred yards across. However, thirty nets would form a circle, with beaters, which in diameter could be as much as a mile. Such a large area becomes difficult to control and dangerous. Since it is customary for
422 nets to be owned only by married men, and exceptionally by a bache-
554 lor who has proved himself as a particularly fine hunter, it can be seen
162 that a net-hunting band, to be an efficient economic unit, must be limited to between six or seven and thirty nuclear families.

224 Insofar as brothers tend to learn to hunt from their father they
476 make ideal hunting partners, and frequently stand in line in the hunt.
593 It is important to know the habits of the hunter next to you, as he will be hidden by the undergrowth and his movements must be anticipated before shooting an arrow or throwing a spear in the direction of any game. Even when game falls into a net there is still danger, since the smallest antelope is vicious when trapped, and the larger animals capable of inflicting serious injury with their teeth and horns. A trapped animal has to be killed as quickly as possible, and anyone nearby will run to the spot with his spear at the ready. Injuries resulting to Mbuti in the resultant melee are not frequent, but when they occur it is almost always between two people who do not commonly hunt close to each other, and who have misjudged each other's movements.

224 However, there is no rule about brothers setting up their nets next
476 to each other; the order of nets is determined primarily by age, the
561 older hunters occupying the center of the semicircle of nets, the younger hunters at the fringes (conveniently separating fathers from their older sons, with whom there may be some rivalry). A young man is much more likely to choose to hunt beside an unrelated friend of the same age than beside a brother who is much older or younger than he is. A dispute in camp may upset the customary order, but generally the order, once established, remains fairly constant except for the retirement of older men from the center, and the movement inward from the younger men at the extremities. Temporary visitors to the camp usually hunt near the ends of the semicircle, but older men will probably be invited to join those in the center.

224 Magic associated with the net-hunt is slight. If rain threatens there
739 are a few hunters who will try to blow the rain away by allowing moss
821 to fall from their fingers while they blow at it and wave their arms in the direction they wish the clouds to go. Sometimes a whistle is blown, with the same arm-waving. If rain comes despite these activities, there is generally laughter, and the "magician" shrugs his shoulders as though he expected as much.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Indeed, certain elements of the forest system can only be explained in relationship to the village context, such as the excessively fluid composition of the band and the almost paranoid attitude to a single villager passing through a hunting camp, sufficient to suspend the vital and central, all-important *molimo* festival, even at its height, or transform it into a village-style parody. This quite singular feature has found no explanation in terms of either the village alone or the forest alone. Let us then briefly review the forest system, and look at it again in the village context. The following elements have emerged as having the greatest structural significance:

1. THE BAND is the basic unit, its membership being influenced by economic rather than kinship considerations. Constant association and cooperative compatibility outweigh kinship even within the band in regulating the process of fission and fusion. This latter process is related to the annual honey season, but it is not determined by it. The over-all size of the band, or of its subsections, is, however, determined by ecological factors resulting in a maximum of about thirty nuclear families for a band, and a minimum of three families for a subsection. Although the band is nonlineal, the network of consanguineal and affinal interpersonal relationships is recognized to link all members, so that the terminology, while referring to age levels regardless of actual or fictive kinship, still has the same affective qualities of kinship terminology, the term referring to age mates (*apua'i*) being the most widely used, and the most effective.

With the best will in the world, it is not possible to apply the kind of analysis suggested by Lévi-Strauss (1958) for following his argument (that the biological family makes a poor starting point); further we must also abandon the affinal family and the system of affective relationships that Lévi-Strauss saw to pertain there. For among the Mbuti affective relationships are determined more by age than by kinship, consanguineal or affinal. We simply cannot follow a set formula that takes no account of the age factor. Thus *f/s* is positive when *s* is a child.[1] It is negative when *s* is a youth, becomes less strained when *s* becomes a hunter, but only approaches positive again when *f* becomes an elder. In other words the relationship is positive as long as *f/s* are not in adjacent age levels. The greatest friction arises when *s* approaches adulthood and is about to become a hunter, a signal for the retirement of the father into elderhood. It

[1] *f* = father; *s* = son; *m* = mother, *d* = daughter; *b* = brother; *z* = sister.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

TABLE 5

613 LINEAGES CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMPOSITION OF
621 THE EPULU NET-HUNTING BAND DURING 1957–1958, NOT
162 INCLUDING VISITORS STAYING LESS THAN THE
DURATION OF ONE CAMP

	married		*unmarried*
Bambaka	14	13	15
Bandohwa	1	—	3
Bi	—	2	4
Bokele (1)	2	3	4
(2)	9	5	11
(3)	—	1	—
Bolima	2	—	—
Bomawa	3	8	8
Bongwina	2	5	5
Bucla	1	1	—
Bwango	2	1	3
Meki	—	2	2
Molomba	—	2	1
Ngamo	5	—	7
Pasima	—	1	—
Pokama	1	—	4
Pokbaya	2	2	5
Poté	—	1	—
Poteba	3	2	5
Potola	1	2	—
Poya	2	—	5
Pucmi (1)	5	4	7
(2)	6	3	11
Pukena	—	2	2
Puma	1	2	4
Pumasa	—	1	—
Pusa	—	2	5
Pusei	—	1	1
Titi	—	—	1
Ungbawa	3	—	7
Totals:	65	66	131

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1966) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Individual members mentioned in text by name are indicated on Table 4. 613 621 162

To get some idea of the extent of mobility from band to band, the figures in Table 5 (total) should be compared with figures that could be reasonably expected to apply to an average-sized camp of this band; *i.e.*, of 17 huts, each containing a married couple and three or four unmarried children.

Any one such "average" camp would be composed of little more than a quarter of all those who, at one time or another during the year, would be band members.

family; that is, a man, his wife, and their children, if any. This group will occupy one hut together, and its personnel is normally fairly stable.

Each biological family belongs to a larger family group or extended family. All the families within a family group are closely related to each other through the male line. That is, each family group will consist of one or more closely related old men, and his or their male descendants and their families. It is these old men, from all the family groups in a camp, who together form the "ruling" age grade.

Ideally, a pygmy camp consists of a number of these family groups descended through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named. Therefore, the basic pygmy camp is thus a classic gens, or, in looser terminology, a patrilineal clan.

The families and family groups are strictly exogamic, and the clan is also exogamic if all members live in the same camp. If, however, it is scattered, the exogamy is not too strictly enforced, although a pygmy will never marry anyone to whom he knows himself to be related, on either side.

The pygmy camp.—Although this is the formal, ideal situation, the composition of the camp is complicated by the presence of visitors from other camps who belong to different clans and can be married. So it can be seen that the clan and the camp are not, in practice, synonymous.

Pygmy camps are not all the same size; there is a minimum and a maximum number of people who can live together as a cohabitive group, owing to their needs of hunting, and so forth. Fifty huts is about the limit, with from twenty to forty the optimum, and twenty-five the average. Each hut contains one man, his wife, or wives, and a few children, so that one hundred and fifty might be an average number

621 of pygmies, of both sexes and all ages,
592 to a camp, with from twenty to forty
162 active adult males.

621 361 **Moving camp.**—The pygmies live in any given camp for a month or two at a time. By that time they will have frightened most of the game out of the immediate neighborhood, so that they have to walk a long way to hunt and a long way back. Furthermore, since [514] they relieve themselves at only a short distance from their huts, the whole camp will have become extremely malodorous by that time and uncomfortable even by pygmy standards, and a shift is doubly necessary.

484 361 When they have decided where to move, the women pack their carrying baskets with their pots and axes, and a small supply of ficus bark for the men to beat into cloth at their leisure. [482] Whatever they own they will pile on their backs, along with their babies, the babies often mounting the rest of the load. The men will take only their weapons—their bows and arrows and elephant spears.

Once the women are loaded they will start out, and reach the new area at about noon. They begin wandering about looking for a good spot—a place near water where there is supposed to be game, and fruit. Game is the first consideration, then fruit, but a *sine qua non* is to be about fifty yards from drinking water. The next consideration is to have the camp on a moderate slope so it will not become a quagmire when it rains. Another consideration is the absence of dead branches or leaning trunks which might be blown down during the wind storm which precedes the afternoon rain.

361 621 When they have hit upon a suitable spot, the women build the huts in a circle with the doorways facing in. There is no orientation, nor are any spots preferred. There are no special huts for unmarried boys or girls, or